THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During the current financial year.

Vigilant Monitoring System during heavy rains

1177. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the midst of heavy rains and over-flooding of rivulets near culverts and railway bridges, there is any vigilant monitoring system through co-ordination of railway engineers and the concerned State's mandal-wise engineers and revenue authorities, to fore-see the dangers of railway track in advance;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the details of various measures already in force to send messages to the engine driver to stop or slow down, when there is a danger to the railway track during the normal times and during the period of heavy rains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) There are certain works carried out in the states like Irrigation Tanks and Water Reservoirs, Canals in embankments Marginal Bunds etc. which affect the safety of railway tracks and bridges. Such works are called 'Railway Affecting Works'. It was therefore found necessary that Railway authorities are kept informed of the broad details and maintenance and upkeep of these works by the authorities concerned so that steps to ensure safety of track etc., if necessary, could be taken in time. The attention of the Chief Ministers of States was drawn to the above during conference of chief Ministers with the Railway Minister in 5th June, 1957. It was decided to have State Committee of Engineers in each State consisting of officials from the Public Works Deptt., Irrigation, Revenue, Forest etc. of the States concerned and the Railways. The State Committee of Engineers identify the Railway Affecting Works in the State and also address various coordination issues. Government also had appointed a Committee of Engineers in 1967 under the Chairmanship of Dr. A.N. Khosla to study the various aspects related to the safety of Railway tracks and bridges with respect to floods. As a follow up of the recommendations of the Khosla Committee, accepted by the government, rules and procedures to be followed for the construction, maintenance, inspection and operation of 'Railway Affecting Works have bee laid down in the Manual of Instructions

for Railway Affecting Works to be uniformally adopted all over the country. This manual of instruction has been circulated to all State Goverments for approval and adoption.

As per the laid down procedures, the parties owning the 'Railway Affecting Works' should regularly inspect and maintain these works as per the approved procedures and schedule laid down in the manual. Any repair or strengthening has to be carried out by them with utmost expedition before the onset of monsoon. Any request from Railway administration in connection with strengthening, repairs and maintenance and operation of all such works to esure safety of Railway lines is to be attended with promptitude. As per the laid down procedure, in case of any apprehended danger, or actual damage to a 'Railway Affecting work' which might affect the safety of Railway lines, immediate action has to be taken by the party concerned to advise the Station Master and the Railway Engineer concerned so as to enable the Railway officials to take immediate precautionary measures to ensure safety of trains. The Railway engineer and the authorities owning the railway Affecting works also have to arrange with local authorities/village head men in whose jurisdiction 'Railway Affecting Works' are situated to watch them during periods of heavy rains and give timely intimation to nearest Station Master, if there is likelihood of their failure. The Railway engineer in charge of the section also declares any section, which is likely to be affected by non-compliance of the urgently required repairs etc, as vulnerable and makes suitable arrangements for posting of Patrol men/Watchmen at the desired locations during heavy rains. These watchman/patrol men keep a watch at the vulnerable location and are equipped with signals to be displayed to the driver/guard of the train as well as detonators to be put on track for stopping or slowing the trains as required.

Rail accidents caused by Human Failure

1178. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of rail accidents that happened during 2003 and 2004 due to human failure;

(b) whether the inquiry reports compiled by the Rail Safety Directorate after each accident have been implemented; and

(c) if so, the reasons for rail accidents in the first 10 months of 2005 due to human failure?